

# **Governor's Workforce Investment Board Apprenticeship Advisory Committee**

**Jorgenson's, Helena  
March 16, 2006**

## **MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Mike O'Neill, Chair; Jane Baker; John Beaudry; Arlene Becker; Kirk Hammerquist; Jacquie Helt; Lane Larson; Jason Miller; and Arlene Parisot.

**Members Absent:** Karen Fried and Con Sullivan.

**Staff Present:** Mark Maki, Chris Wilhelm, and Jessica Snyder.

**Guests Present:** Duane Mellinger, Polly LaTray, Robert Thornton, Carey Hegeberg, Dan Flynn, Keith Allen, Don Herzog, Jim Keane, and Annette Miller.

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Mike O'Neill called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Jessica Snyder conducted roll call. Chris Wilhelm reviewed the documents in member's packets.

### **Approve Agenda**

John Beaudry moved to approve the agenda; Arlene Parisot seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Approve Meeting Minutes – 1/9/2006**

Jason Miller moved to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2006 meeting. Arlene Parisot seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mark Maki reported a new staff person, Darrell Holzer, had been hired in the Apprenticeship and Training Program. Mr. Maki also stated that he has been invited by the state of North Dakota to give a presentation on the operations and administration of the Montana Apprenticeship and Training Program.

### **Training Center Tour**

The Apprenticeship Advisory Committee members toured the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) training center. The tour and presentation was conducted by Montana Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee Director, Gary Pemble.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **Status of Lineman's College in Butte**

Chairman Mike O'Neill reported on the status of establishing a lineman college in Montana. Preliminary conversations with the electrical co-ops have been scheduled for April 4, 2006 at the annual meeting in Great Falls to discuss the concept of the college. All utilities have been projected to feel the lack of manpower and people are eager to learn more about the development of a lineman college. The project, currently in the conceptual stage, has been compiling potential candidates for a steering committee that would involve all interested people and groups. The lineman college could be used to recruit and retain workers in Montana. Alternatives for a curriculum have been brought up for discussion.

Arlene Parisot asked if the college would be brick and mortar or virtual. Chairman O'Neill stated conceptually it would be brick and mortar with online capabilities but these are things that still need to be finalized. Chairman O'Neill stated the selection process at NorthWestern Energy was arduous and successful candidates were those who had attended line colleges in Idaho, North Dakota, and South Dakota and tended not to be Montana natives. Candidates that received journeymen status have left Montana for better pay in the metropolitan areas. Montana natives would be more successful, and Montana would be more apt to keep trained journeymen in the state. Chairman O'Neill added that the purpose of partnering with higher education was to increase recruitment of Montana residents.

Kirk Hammerquist asked about the length of the schooling. Chairman O'Neill stated that length of schooling had not been determined. Lane Larson asked about the cost of tuition. Chairman O'Neill stated that had not been determined. Don Herzog stated Meridian was a six month program with a cost of \$10,000 and the six month school allowed the students to be employment ready with rudimentary skills and knowledge. Senator Larson stated the apprenticeship program allowed a candidate to be trained in a trade who cannot afford school. Senator Larson did not want to see a process where a candidate could not enter into the trades unless they could afford schooling. Senator Larson also cautioned against training with no place for employment. Chairman O'Neill stated there would be an immediate need and the need would be there for at least five to seven years. Preliminary work was being done to evaluate the need. The lineman college would be a value on the national level. Flooding any trade was a concern and Northern would evaluate the market to establish a cap for their programs. Underprivileged and economically challenged would be eligible for Pell Grants and student loans, the same as any other college student. Jane Baker stated the Butte College of Technology closed and opened programs to meet needs and to prevent over saturation. If a program was unable to employ its students, they don't get any students.

Polly LaTray stated veterans returning from Iraq would have basic skills like a CDL and CPR and asked if there would be a fast track program. Chairman O'Neill stated that the formation of the lineman college was still in the preliminary planning and that once formed, the steering committee would tackle these issues. The Apprenticeship Advisory Committee developed a list of recommended participants for the steering committee that included IBEW, higher education, veteran programs, curriculum developers, state agencies, private industry, and employers with and without a bargaining unit agreement.

#### Business-Labor-Education Meeting Review

Mark Maki reported the outcome of the Commissioner's sponsored January 31<sup>st</sup> meeting basically captured: Skilled workers have become more in demand. However, opportunity for education has been sliding away. Training should be available to all with education becoming involved. Shifting the focus on training would be beneficial. Something needed to be done now and it would require change that would be best for Montana.

#### Washington State Regulations

Mark Maki reviewed the Washington State Regulations with the Apprenticeship Advisory Committee members. The committee could adopt the regulations as a boilerplate and recommend it to the SWIB for the 2007 legislature. This would encourage training that gives back to the workforce in the community. Upon further review of the regulations, the committee wanted to evaluate and gather more information before making a recommendation. The committee members would like to evaluate the following items:

- Tax incentives for programs utilizing apprentices vs. mandatory regulations
- Funding for state regulation
- Who would enforce the regulations?
- Evaluate the cost and feasibility of implementation
- Gather information and comments regarding other options

- Education tax credits for sponsors of apprenticeship
- Apprenticeship benefits for public works projects
- Incentives to offset the training costs of apprentices
- Curriculum that would be acknowledged and recognized everywhere
- Options to raise the pay and benefits scale for laborers.

#### Prime Time to Strike

Discussion was held regarding the possibility of drafting proposed legislation, administrative rules or an Apprenticeship Utilization Bill. The committee requested more information about the cost of implementation and regulation. Mr. Maki also provided a number of other concepts for discussion by the committee that could possibly enforce apprenticeship in Montana.

#### Articulation Agreement

Mr. Maki has been given a directive to bring together a group of people to draft an Articulation Agreement for use by business, education and labor. Rather than bringing together a new group, Mr. Maki suggested that this committee be charged with drafting the Articulation Agreement. The committee did not agree by consensus to draft the Articulation Agreement, but did request continued evaluation of the options to incorporate into the articulation agreement.

#### Promotion and Marketing of Apprenticeship

This is the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of apprenticeship in Montana. Mr. Maki stated that this would be a great opportunity to get the word out about the Apprenticeship and Training Program. It was agreed that trade occupations need to be given more appeal. Mr. Beaudry asked if there was any promotion occurring at this time. Mr. Maki said that the program is being promoted by JATC's, Affirmative Action, career fairs, and material distribution in schools. Discussion was held about the possibility of partnerships to assist with the cost of promotional spots on TV and radio. Another suggestion was to request the Governor to have an Apprenticeship Recognition Week. The committee requested that more information be gathered regarding the cost of promotional spots on TV and radio for not-for-profit organizations.

#### Draft Letter of Support

Lane Larson moved to recommend the SWIB write a letter of support for the Apprenticeship and Training Program. Arlene Parisot seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Set Next Meeting Date

The committee agreed to meet April 13, 2006 in Helena, Montana, to review information in order to draft the articulation agreement.

#### **Adjourn**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.